



# TARGET ACCESS



The above mural was unveiled in St. Louis, Missouri on October 22, 2003.

## Students Paint USDA Rock 'N Roll Wheelchair

TARGET Access

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**O**n October 22, the USDA Midwest TARGET Center in St. Louis, Missouri accepted the donation of a mural painted by several talented children with disabilities. The mural, a gift to the Secretary of Agriculture in honor of USDA's commitment to the considerations of people with disabilities, was painted by students of the Logos School in St. Louis as facilitated by VSA Arts of Missouri.

The ceremony in St. Louis was timed to occur during National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The mural was accepted on behalf of USDA by Rural

Development's Deputy Chief Information Officer John Distler, and its Director of Legislative and Public Affairs Allan Johnson. Also in attendance at the ribbon cutting ceremony were speakers from the office of Senators Christopher Bond and Jim Talent, speakers for representatives Richard Gephardt and Lacy Clay, and Department of Defense's CAP Program director Dinah Cohen.

USDA TARGET Center Director Bruce McFarlane arranged for the shipment of the 10' x 12' mural to USDA Headquarters in Washington, D.C., where it will be

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*“Rock ‘N Roll Painting”...continued*

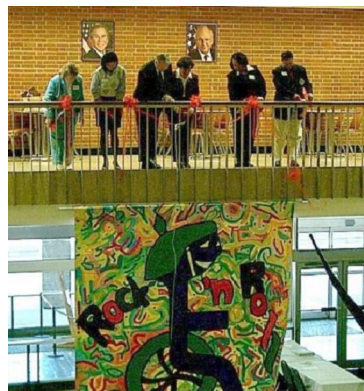
on display temporarily until a permanent location is found. Visit the TARGET web site for updates on the mural’s location.

“Year after year we and the community put our focus on the limitations imposed by disabilities,” stated Betty Gahn, USDA Midwest TARGET Center Director. “It was extremely important to me this year to focus on abilities. I was [very pleased when] VSA Arts came through.”

VSA Arts (formerly Very Special Arts) is a well-known international non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the creative power in people with disabilities. VSA Arts of Missouri provides free programs in creative writing, dance, drama, music, and visual arts that foster individual expression and help participants develop independence, learning skills, and increased self-esteem.

In this particular case, VSA worked with children from the Logos School, a therapeutic middle and high school in St. Louis. The school assists adolescents with conditions such as attention deficit disorder, depression, learning disabilities, obsessive compulsive disorder, Autism, Bipolar Disorder, and other difficulties which may prevent them from succeeding academically and emotionally.

“To paraphrase a statement made by Senator Bond”, Gahn continued, “The mural presented to USDA is a reflection of who these individuals are and is a strong testament of their desire to participate in life to the best of their ability. Truly each piece of art work told an individual story without a word being said. I can only say thank you to all who provided the remarkable pieces of art for our pleasure.”



“The mural presented to USDA is a reflection of who these individuals are...[and] their desire to participate in life to the best of their ability.”

U.S. Senator Bond

